

The Chair recognizes Delegate Betty Miller.

DELEGATE B. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, fellow delegates, what we are discussing here is a specific right of the people, a right to establish democratic procedures in their working places.

Under President Roosevelt this new right was recognized for most workers by the National Labor Relations Act. Under President Eisenhower, its procedures were regulated and formalized by the Taft-Hartley Act. President Kennedy extended this right to federal government employees by Executive Order 10,988.

Now the trend is to extend this right to those employees in the State who do not yet enjoy it. What the proposal does is to affirm the extension of this right in the Maryland constitution to benefit that segment of our economy which does not enjoy these rights now by reason of this single omission. This is not a right for the protection and aid of those who are covered by federal statute. It does nothing for the members of the established great unions of our State. This is a right to aid the poverty stricken, the underpaid workers, those who are not now covered by minimum wage laws, or who just come under the new minimum wage laws, the borderline poverty workers unprotected and unrepresented, and the great and growing army of public employees who are falling behind their private industry counterparts.

It is inconceivable that you men and women of good will, with the best intentions toward the citizenry, would fail to protect these people who most merit your concern. We are not here granting any new rights but extending existing ones to a whole group of neglected workers many of whom labor at wages far below the poverty level. I have often marveled at the wage-earner who struggled through a 40-hour week at 80 cents an hour, when a welfare check would far exceed that.

THE PRESIDENT: Your time has expired.

DELEGATE B. MILLER: I plead for those workers. Please support the reconsideration.

THE PRESIDENT: Does any delegate desire to speak in opposition to the motion? Delegate Harry Taylor.

DELEGATE H. TAYLOR: Mr. President, I get letters from a person who signs them as an admirer. From the tenor of the letters sometimes I do not think that he

really is, but over the holidays, after we had incorporated this right to organize provision in the constitution, he sent me a little sink, and he said, "It looks like you fellows have put everything in the constitution but the kitchen sink. I want you to take this down, and maybe somehow or other you can work it in."

It is not really a sink, it is a stove. When I made the discovery and it got back to the admirer, he said, "Well, I did not think you would know the difference."

*(Laughter.)*

We are not down here to pass constitutional provisions for labor. We are not down here to pass constitutional provisions for preachers, and, believe it or not, we are not down here to pass constitutional provisions for lawyers or for judges. We came down here for a very simple task — to set up an executive, a judicial, and a legislative branch of government, to provide for a declaration of rights, and to provide for some general provisions.

This provision on the right to organize is a volatile provision that is going to pit labor against management. It is going to be one of those things that may make this constitution an Edsel instead of a Mustang. You probably remember the Edsel motor car: it looked like an Oldsmobile that had been sucking on a lemon. When Ford Motor Company sent that out to the public, they thought they would buy it.

On May 14, we are going to find out whether we have got an Edsel or a Mustang. If you want to build a Mustang, vote against this motion to reconsider.

THE PRESIDENT: Does any other delegate desire to speak in favor? Delegate Mitchell.

DELEGATE MITCHELL: Mr. President and fellow delegates, that may be funny to Delegate Taylor, but it is not funny to the overwhelming majority of the adult citizens of the State. We have heard some specious and fallacious arguments today. You have heard a very learned former judge and a representative of big business say that this pertains to just a class of people.

We have written into this constitution rights for the accused, and that is a small class of citizens in this State. We have written in rights — and I would say the majority of the citizens, judging by the church attendance, are nonreligious — but we have protected the rights of those that